



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION**

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STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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May 1, 2025

Dear County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

**Update Regarding School Discipline Policies**

The purpose of this letter is to share information that may be of use as local educational agencies (LEAs) work to understand the recent Executive Order titled, "Reinstating Common Sense School Discipline Policies," issued by the Trump Administration on April 23, 2025.

Disproportionate discipline of students based on race is a real concern in our education system that should not be ignored or obfuscated by the Trump Administration. The California Department of Education is proud of the progress that our state has made to address school safety while reducing out-of-school suspensions and addressing discriminatory disparities in suspension rates. Every child is entitled to a fair opportunity to be in school and learn.

We continue our work to address real threats to students' physical and emotional safety at school, including cyberbullying, hate speech, and threats of violence. We approach this work with an equity lens to ensure that students are not disciplined differently because of the color of their skin or their ethnic background.

While the CDE takes issue with many of the assumptions and assertions made in the Trump letter, we do agree that discipline must be applied in a non-discriminatory fashion in accordance with state and federal laws. To help our schools, Superintendent Thurmond has published guidance about how schools can tackle disproportionality in a legally compliant manner on the CDE News Releases web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr23/yr23rel12.asp>. See also, the CDE School Discipline Information and Resources–School Environment web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/se/schooldiscipline.asp>.

Students and families who feel subject to discriminatory discipline practices may pursue such claims through the Uniform Complaint Procedure (UCP), including complaints based on discrimination in discipline practices. See the CDE Uniform Complaint Procedures Complaint Procedures web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cp/uc/index.asp>.

Resources to address and improve school safety are available on the CDE's School Safety web page: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/>.

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We will continue to keep the field apprised of the CDE's responses to federal actions. An ongoing list of CDE's 2025 responses to federal actions is maintained on this web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/fa/>.

Thank you for your continued hard work on behalf of all students in the State of California. As we at the CDE continue to focus on moving the needle for student achievement, we again commend all California school staff who are maintaining a local focus on the all-important task of serving our students.

Sincerely,

*Signed by*

Ingrid Roberson  
Chief Deputy Superintendent  
California Department of Education

*Signed by*

David Schapira  
Chief Deputy Superintendent  
Chief of Staff  
California Department of Education